

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 25, 2011

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 25, 2011

SENATE BILL

No. 379

Introduced by Senators Fuller and Cannella
(Coauthors: Senators Berryhill, La Malfa, Rubio, and Vargas)

February 15, 2011

An act to amend Section 709 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 379, as amended, Fuller. Telecommunications policies.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including telephone corporations, as defined. Existing law declares the policies for telecommunications for California, including: ~~(1) to continue our universal service commitment by assuring the continued affordability and widespread availability of high-quality telecommunications services to all Californians; (2) to focus efforts on providing educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based organizations, and governmental institutions with access to advanced telecommunications services in recognition of their economic and societal impact; and (3) to promote economic growth, job creation, and the substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid implementation of advanced information and communications technologies by adequate long-term investment in the necessary infrastructure.~~

This bill would ~~instead~~ declare the policies for telecommunications for California, ~~including~~ *to include*: (1) to continue our universal service commitment by ensuring the continued affordability and widespread availability of high-quality telecommunications services to all

Californians; ~~(2) to focus efforts on providing public safety institutions, educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based organizations, and governmental institutions with access to advanced telecommunications and information services in recognition of their economic and societal impact; (3) to promote economic growth, job creation, and the substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid implementation of advanced telecommunications and information technologies by facilitating adequate long-term investment in the necessary infrastructure throughout the state, including in rural areas; and (4) and (2) to continue universal service rate support for telephone corporations subject to rate-of-return regulation by the commission for the purpose of providing rural areas of the state with access to telecommunications services.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 709 of the Public Utilities Code is
- 2 amended to read:
- 3 709. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the policies
- 4 for telecommunications in California are as follows:
- 5 (a) To continue our universal service commitment by ensuring
- 6 the continued affordability and widespread availability of
- 7 high-quality telecommunications services to all Californians.
- 8 (b) To focus efforts on providing ~~public safety institutions,~~
- 9 educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based
- 10 organizations, and governmental institutions with access to
- 11 advanced telecommunications ~~and information~~ services in
- 12 recognition of their economic and societal impact.
- 13 (c) To continue universal service rate support for telephone
- 14 corporations subject to rate-of-return regulation by the commission
- 15 for the purpose of providing rural areas of the state with access to
- 16 telecommunications services.
- 17 (d) To encourage the development and deployment of new
- 18 technologies and the equitable provision of services in a way that
- 19 efficiently meets consumer needs and encourages the ubiquitous
- 20 availability of a wide choice of state-of-the-art services.

1 (e) To assist in bridging the “digital divide” by encouraging
2 expanded access to state-of-the-art technologies for rural,
3 inner-city, low-income, and disabled Californians.

4 (f) To promote economic growth, job creation, and the
5 substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid
6 implementation of advanced ~~telecommunications and information~~
7 *information and communications* technologies by facilitating
8 adequate long-term investment in the necessary infrastructure
9 ~~throughout the state, including in rural areas.~~

10 (g) To promote lower prices, broader consumer choice, and
11 avoidance of anticompetitive conduct.

12 (h) To remove the barriers to open and competitive markets and
13 promote fair product and price competition in a way that
14 encourages greater efficiency, lower prices, and more consumer
15 choice.

16 (i) To encourage fair treatment of consumers through provision
17 of sufficient information for making informed choices,
18 establishment of reasonable service quality standards, and
19 establishment of processes for equitable resolution of billing and
20 service problems.

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